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16 October 1965

BRIEFING NOTES
FOR DCI

CONGO

(MAP)

I. President Kasavubu's 13 October dismissal of Tshombé has opened a period of political turmoil in Leopoldville.

A. The contest between them is basically a struggle over the presidency, which is the center of authority under the constitution.

1. Presidential elections must be held within six months, and the intervening period is likely to see occasional violence all over the Congo as the Tshombé and Kasavubu factions compete for support.

B. Tshombé's strength lies in his large parliamentary following, in his national stature, and in his control of some provincial assemblies.

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1. The white mercenaries now in northern and eastern Congo might support him if he resorted to extralegal action.

Their intentions, however, are unknown at the moment.

C. Kasavubu is currently allied with Interior Minister Nendaka in a campaign to undermine Tshombé, both in the national legislature and in the country as a whole.

1. Nendaka, an opportunist with no strong ideological ties, has recently sought help from radical African states, especially Ghana.

2. He has formed an anti-Tshombé alliance in Parliament, and he is assembling a goon squad to intimidate Leopoldville politicians.

D. Evariste Kimba, whom Kasavubu named to form a new government, is a fairly able moderate who has had good relations with American officials.

1. He lacks a political following of his own, however, and is likely to be dependent on Nendaka and Kasavubu.

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2. Kimba was seriously ill with tuberculosis earlier this year, but his health seems fairly good now.

E. Tshombé seems likely to stay in Leopoldville for the present and work in Parliament to block his opponents' efforts to form a government.

1. However, if he feels seriously threatened with violence by his opponents, he might retire to his Katanga stronghold and reactivate his secessionist state.

II. On the rebel front, the capture of Fizi has cut off the last insurgent area which had access to significant outside aid. Tanzania, which had been giving the rebels substantial aid, now says it has discontinued all such help.

A. The rebels are scattered and disunited and are no match for Colonel Hoare's mercenaries.

B. Rebels still move freely through large areas of the country, however, and the campaign to reestablish central authority throughout the country will be long and arduous.